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Reentry Resources Available to University Students Returning from Study Abroad Programs: A Case Study

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REENTRY RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS RETURNING FROM STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Students from overseas study abroad programs are returning to the US with feelings of distress, anxiety, and cultural identity confusion, most of which are not dealt with on the university campus. This study looks at a large Midwestern university to determine what kinds of resources are available to these students, whether or not they help students with feelings of reentry shock, and suggests new ways to assist in culturally ambiguous situations experienced on the home country campus.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Universities nation-wide continue to sing the praises of the study abroad experience for creating a well-rounded and culturally-aware student cohort. Some universities, like Goucher College, St Mary's College of Maryland, and Goshen College, have even made international study a mandatory step in the undergraduate curriculum. At the individual campus level, the number of students participating in study abroad programs is often taken as an indicator of overall institutional quality; a campus which has heavily invested in international education is perceived as likely to offer a stimulating learning environment (Stroud, 2006). Additionally, institutions that invest in education abroad are keeping up with a growing emphasis of globalization and internationalization in higher education. As short-term study abroad programs make it easier for more students and less-traditional students to study abroad, more attention is being paid to this area of undergraduate education. The numbers support the trend as well. According to the Institute of International Education, ten years ago about 150,000 students went abroad; in 2009/2010 more than 270,000 students took part in programs, representing an 80% increase (Open Doors Report, 2011). While a decade ago about 10% of students studied abroad in programs less than eight weeks in length, today this number is up to 54%.

Even with all this attention being lavished on the study abroad student and the experiences they will have, one area has been harshly overlooked. That area is the personal psychological change that happens to a number of returned study abroad students. Many universities now give preparation to prospective study abroad students about the possibility of "culture shock" while abroad, but fewer have included content focused on the occurrence of "reverse culture shock" or "reentry shock". Reentry shock is similar to culture shock in that they both describe adaptation difficulties. Culture shock refers to difficulties adapting to a new culture while reentry shock refers to difficulties in readapting to the home culture. The reentry difficulty tends to manifest itself as strain in personal relationships and in adjustment and emotional well-being challenges (Casteen, 2006). These students often have feelings of being misunderstood by those around them, an inability to connect with family and friends, sadness, and sometimes resentment of their surroundings. While students fully expect problems in cultural adaptation when they first move overseas, it is less common for them to expect to face trouble in reentering their home cultures (Adler, 1981; Storti, 1997; Sussman, 1986).

This phenomenon of cross-cultural psychology, while being less researched and less documented than its counter-part of culture shock, is also discussed less by university study abroad advisors. As a result, there are fewer resources and also less-frequented resources in university study abroad offices.

For the purpose of this project, I use a Midwestern university as a case study in order to determine the kinds of resources available to returned study abroad students, whether the returned study abroad students knew of and used these resources, and whether or not these resources were seen as helpful by the students. Are universities taking seriously the occurrence of reentry shock? Do they acknowledge it or know how to aid in it? More importantly, are they preparing students for the occurrence of it upon their return to the United States? What else can be done to help students not only socially-readjust and academically-readjust to their home culture, but psychologically readjust and evaluate what happened to them while abroad in a significant and personal manner?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The reentry literature suggests several concepts around the topic of study abroad and returning home. First, for many returnees, reentry shock is more severe and debilitating than the initial adjustment to the host culture (NAFSA, 2005). Second, those students who are the most successful in their adjustment and integration abroad often experience more severe reentry challenges than individuals who do not adapt well overseas. Some research, however, suggests that individuals who adapt well abroad also adapt well when they return home (Sussman, 1986). The prior theory may be more applicable to first-time returnees having difficulty, whereas subsequent reentry transitions may prove to be smoother and easier. A third hypothesis is that readjustment challenges can be related to the length of time spent abroad and how different students' host cultures are from their home cultures (Casteen, 2006).

Acculturation Literature

Adler (1981) takes the previous model of phases of culture shock from Gullahorn & Gullahorn and presents her own model of the re-entry transition. This "flattened U-shape curve" follows the changes in mood of the returnee from the initial high period through the low drop and evening out with a moderately high mood. Adler used interviews with international corporate managers to identify the initial high mood

brought about by their expectations of familiarity. This lead to the returnees' lowest points which were during the second and third months. Adler claimed these were caused by the realization that their home environment did not fit their expectations. These employees felt a discontinuity and a loss of momentum in their careers.

This study had a deep undercurrent of xenophobia and the part that it played in employees feeling at home in their former work environment. On self-assessment and colleague-assessment tests, Adler found that "the more returnees used the skills and knowledge that they had acquired overseas, the more effective they rated themselves and the more ineffective they were rated by colleagues" (1981).

Rohrlich and Martin (1991) take the communication-centered model of sojourner adaptation (put out by Kim, 1989) and adapt it to a new context. Kim's model suggests that "sojourners with greater adaptive disposition in a receptive host environment will interact more with the host nationals and will ultimately be more successful in adapting to the host country." Rohrlich & Martin extend Kim's theory of sojourner adaptation into the return home in order to analyze the ability of a highly adaptive student sojourner to adjust to their home country. They emphasize the importance of host country social communication in effecting sojourner adjustment.

The results show a gender difference, with women reporting significantly more difficulty in all areas of sojourner adjustment. This paper also analyzes the type and frequency of communication that student sojourners are involved in during their study abroad experience, and how this communication relates to their adjustment to the

home country. The researchers found a significant relationship between specific communication activities and reentry adjustment. “The more frequently students had engaged in ‘these activities’ abroad, the less likely they were to be satisfied with life on their return”(Rohrlich & Martin, 1991). Consequently, the more involved in the host country the student became, the more adjustment difficulties they had in their home country. This suggests that sojourner communication in host country is important in understanding reentry adjustment.

Cox (2004) speaks to the ways that the amount of communication technology that sojourners use can affect the cultural adjustment and the repatriation process. The author looked at sojourners’ use of technology services during their sojourn in order to see how this may have effected repatriation. The study measured satisfaction with and frequency of communication items (e-mails, letters, phone calls, faxes, and ham radio), mass-media information technology items (newspapers, magazines, short-wave radio, television, movies, music, and Internet), as well as what kind of relationships were being maintained (relatives, friends, colleagues, organizational leaders).

In terms of communication satisfaction, Cox found a mix of both technology-mediated communication and face-to-face communication (i.e. visits from relatives or friends), demonstrating that several types of technology-mediated communication (i.e. emails, telephone, faxes) can be just as satisfying or more satisfying than types of face-to-face communication. The sojourners’ satisfaction with the above-mentioned communication types was associated with better repatriation adjustment.

Cox then adapted the framework of previous researchers in order to identify four types of sojourners that return to their home country. These included home-favored, host-favored, integrated, and disintegrated. Cox found that the lowest depression scores were held by the integrated category of sojourners, followed by home-favored, host-favored, and disintegrated. Cox also found that the lowest degree of social difficulty was recorded for the integrated group, followed by the home-favored, disintegrated, and host-favored groups. These conclusions indicate that the healthiest pattern to adapt while abroad is one in which students acquire proficiency in the host culture while maintaining connection with the home culture through technological communication.

This study, though informative on the subject of media and communication technologies and their effect on repatriation, is still outdated. This research took place before the boom of Skype or the creation of Facebook, both of which have changed the way we communicate internationally. It would be interesting to take this research model to current study abroad students that are easily able to communicate with family and friends and to stay current with news back home.

Sussman (2002) used the Cultural Identity Model, which analyses and groups returned student sojourners into four groups based on their cultural identity change, in order to look at the relationship between overseas adaptation and repatriation as well as the role of cultural identity strength in relation to the repatriation experience.

This study found a significant relationship between cultural identity strength and

repatriation distress. American sojourners who experienced high distress during their repatriation to the US felt the most estranged from the American identity, that is, they possess a weak cultural identity. Conversely, sojourners who embrace a strong American Cultural Identity expressed lower repatriation stress. The variation in the repatriating experience can be explained not as a simple relationship with a degree of cultural adaptation to the host country but rather as a more complex consequence of the strength of one's cultural identity following a sojourn.

Both acculturation and reacculturation are characterized by a sense of loss of familiar cues and as a process of integrating into a different cultural system. Both processes involve aspects of culture learning or culture relearning. Martin (1984) compares the acculturation and reacculturation process and points to the importance of expectations literature. Students are likely to expect difficulties and newness in adjusting to the initial foreign environment. On that same point, members of the host culture will expect the newcomer to experience difficulty and to behave differently from native members of the culture. However, the individual is unlikely to expect to have difficulty reentering the home environment. Also, the friends and family of the returned sojourner are not likely to expect the sojourner to have difficulties in reentry. Martin examines the critical variables that effect reentry shock, including background variables like age, gender, and academic level but also examines location and duration of sojourn, degree of interaction with host culture, and readiness to return.

Citron (1996) supports the claim of reentry shock as a developmental process, as

opposed to the other perspective that sees reentry shock as a problem, “a debilitating difficulty.” This suggests that experiencing feelings of reentry shock are actually preferred to no reentry symptoms at all, as this means that the student has grown and gained something new from their time abroad instead of gaining no new insights into themselves of the world. The author claims that international educators have an obligation to promote personal growth and learning from undergraduate study abroad experiences. Citron also suggests that there is a continuum of cultural immersion depending on the institution and the amount of immersion that their students experience. Where the institution is placed on the continuum could explain how immersed a student becomes in the culture, and therefore the amount of reentry shock they experience upon their return.

Ryan & Twibell (2000) draw a line from the stress experienced by students abroad to the coping methods of students directly to the health of participating students. They explore the relationships between perceptions of stress, coping, and health through a longitudinal study of students before, during, and after a cross-cultural learning experience. Ryan & Twibell identified the primary concerns of students who studied abroad as more strongly concerned with social performance and adaptation than with having physical needs met than in studies of decades past. This indicates the new priorities of a new generation of study abroad students as more social, especially in the social media-centered world of current students. Additionally, awareness of an emerging global society may increase anticipation of a positive social experience abroad

and incline students to seek fulfilling relationships with others in a new culture, not just "survive to tell about it" (Ryan & Twibell, 2000).

Expectations Research

In this article Martin, Bradford, and Rorhlich (1995) look at the ways that the expectations of returning sojourners effect the way a student evaluates a study abroad experience. They cite the expectancy value model in psychological research that suggests it is the fulfillment of expectations about a sojourn that leads to positive evaluations and ultimately to satisfactory sojourner adaptation (Furnham, 1988; Furnham & Bochner, 1986). Conversely, violations of these expectations lead to negative evaluations of a sojourn and problematic adaptation (Cochrane, 1983). The authors build upon this theory by considering the expectancy violation, whereby unmet expectations are not predicted to produce *only* negative evaluations and outcomes; expectations may be violated *either positively or negatively* and perceived positive violations (where things turn out better than expected) are predicted to produce positive evaluations and outcomes.

This research focused on the variables of the student sojourner themselves, and the effect these variables had on both the expectation of and satisfaction of a study abroad experience. In particular, this study emphasizes previous domestic relocation and amount of time spent abroad prior to the study abroad experience. The results suggested that expectations about overseas sojourns seem to be violated positively, as measured by pre- and post-objective measures and may reflect a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Pitts (2009) adds to the discussion of expectation discrepancies and how they affect cross-cultural adaptation, however Pitts looks more closely at short-term study abroad programs. The numbers of students studying abroad have gone up significantly in the last 10 years, in very large part due to the larger numbers of short-term study abroad programs offered. These programs are ideal for students in disciplines that do not allow for much variation in schedule like nursing students, pre-med students, and engineering students. These programs allow less-traditional study abroad students the chance to study for a brief time during summer or winter sessions.

This paper describes the ethnographic investigation of sojourner adjustment across the course of a short-term sojourn. Pitts uses the Integrative Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation as a frame to explore and explain the role of expectations, talk, and identity in a short-term sojourn. The results bring to light specific locations of sojourner stress ("expectation gaps"), the patterns of communication used to manage that stress, and the ways in which these might intersect across the sojourn to influence sojourner identity (Pitts, 2009).

Christofi & Thompson (2007) used phenomenological interviews of 8 participants who worked or studied in a new country in order to understand the personal experiences of these sojourners, why they chose to reenter their host country, and what implications this has to the field of education abroad.

Their interviews suggested that the expectations of the sojourner play a large role; the idealized perception of what "home" would be like on their return was

described as disappointing. This, as well as the factors of individual change, home community change, and home community lack of change, lead to an "internal conflict." These participants described themselves as unbalances, as having a foot in each country, and felt they had to choose one country; all of them chose the host country.

Hunley's research with Loyola University Rome Center students seeks to determine whether depression or loneliness can effect a student's involvement in the host culture (2009). It was hypothesized that study abroad students that experienced psychological distress and also those that experienced loneliness would demonstrate lower levels of functioning while abroad. The Functioning of Students Abroad Questionnaire (FOSA) was developed by the researcher in order to measure students' overall levels of functioning while abroad and was administered during two different semesters and over multiple periods. Hunley found that even sub-clinical levels of anxiety and depression and moderate levels of loneliness can adversely affect students' functioning while abroad. Hunley also adds that "it may be necessary to provide students with mental health care while abroad by both alleviating more acute psychological distress that may arise while abroad and promote healthy coping skills for all students." The results of this study suggest the need to actively promote and educate students about the importance of positive coping.

Populations of International Experiences

The demographics of study abroad students have been an area of interest for many researchers. Stroud (2010) points out the disparity in study abroad participation

rates by gender, race and academic major. Even now only 36.5% of all US study abroad students are male (IIE, 2011) despite the fact that men comprised 43.8% of the entire US undergraduate population in 2009 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). Currently, racial and ethnic minorities account for only 21.3% of all US students studying abroad (IIE, 2011) although they make up 34.3% of the college population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). In accordance with national data identifying the most prevalent majors among college students, the three fields of study most represented among study abroad participants include social sciences (22.3%), business management (20.8%), and humanities (12.1%)(IIE, 2011). Of the 1,601,000 bachelor's degrees conferred in 2008–09, the greatest numbers of degrees were conferred in the fields of business (348,000); social sciences and history (169,000); health sciences (120,000); and education (102,000) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). This shows that the areas of study that are most ubiquitous overall in higher education are also the most ubiquitous in study abroad. For many, this implies the need for more diversity of students in study abroad programs. Stroud looked not only at who studies abroad and who does not, but at specific demographics of incoming freshman students who claim they intend to study abroad.

Stroud then attempts to predict which students are more likely to actually study abroad based on new factors like the university's geographical distance from a students' home, students' parental income, and students' attitudes about other cultures. She draws interesting conclusions from these predictions, including the importance of this

nuanced understanding of intent to study abroad in order to reach out to underrepresented populations.

Wielkiewicz & Turkowski (2010) examine the effects of study abroad on anxiety and depression, romantic relationships, grades, alcohol consumption, and feelings of reentry shock by comparing a large sample of students, one group who had returned from study abroad programs and one group who had not studied abroad. It was found that study abroad was correlated with higher GPAs, a more skeptical view of American culture, higher alcohol consumption (although a three-way analysis of variance showed that this was due more to the effect of age than to study abroad), and an increased academic workload. It was found that women experienced more anxiety and depression due to study abroad than men, and it was *not* found that study abroad meant the demise of a romantic relationship. Wielkiewicz & Turkowski gave extensive implications for student development professionals including some unique programs for returned study abroad students. Wielkiewicz & Turkowski suggested that these students would benefit from having supports available to maintain academic motivation as well as opportunities to discuss their issues. They also encouraged study abroad returnees to attend informal focus groups in order to discuss potential positive and negative effects experienced by returning sojourners.

The concept of reentry applies to other populations of returners as well**.** Chamove and Soeterik (2006) discuss the experience of reentry with a population of high school students returning home after one year spent abroad. Referring to previous

literature that compares reentry shock to grief, these researchers sought to see if the "loss" of the host culture could produce standard symptoms of grieving in these students aged 16–18. The results demonstrated levels of grief symptoms not dissimilar to those experiencing grief through bereavement. The similarity between returning sojourners and bereaved groups suggest that the use of the concept of grief in examining the process of cross-cultural reentry may be informative**.**

Leigh (2006) looks at the reentry experiences of volunteer tourists who she claims struggle to reconcile all they have learned in their host community with that which they are expected to follow in their home community. She brings up the concept of a *third culture*, in which a participant feels that they belong neither in the home nor host culture. In cases like this, the participant develops their own culture, which is a combination of the two cultures. It is my position that the concept of third culture can be applied to returning study abroad students.

Reentry Programming

The NAFSA manual (2005) discusses what kinds of changes to expect in returned study abroad students, also listing the benefits of such changes. The manual details examples of reentry programs including social, informal events and all-day workshops, each broken down into quarter-hour timelines to follow. The manual lists the four goals and objectives for on-campus reentry programs. They include: assist students in their readjustment to the home culture and to college or university life after studying abroad; help students learn to reflect on and articulate what they learned from their education

abroad experience; facilitate opportunities for students to incorporate their international experiences into their lives at home, both academically and personally; help students identify ways they may use and market their international experience in the future (NAFSA, 2005). As NAFSA is considered the preeminent source on matters of American education abroad, it is expected that university-provided reentry programming should attempt to incorporate these topics central to students' reentry experiences.

Buckingham, Drapelick, Finck and Hulnick (2000) use the School for International Training (SIT) as a case study and speak to the requirements of a cross-cultural counselor whose job it is to make international students feel supported and understood in their new cultural environment. They also discuss the topic of counseling itself and how it is not understood as a global practice; it could, in fact, be difficult for many international students to use this service as it is intended. The pedagogy of SIT uses an experiential education model, and in the context of counselors, the use of direct communication and reflective practices may sharply contrast with those used in a more traditional academic milieu.

The authors break down the "counselor how-to's" when working with international students, especially how to work around cultural differences dealing with language capabilities, diversity issues, and cultural interpretations of communication styles. The authors map out how SIT has built a community of support for international students and how they've prepared student services focused on counseling from the

orientation up to their departure.

The authors then explain how a knowledgeable, experienced, and flexible support staff must be able to embrace a multiplicity of worldviews and respond to a broad range of needs beginning with student arrival and continuing through departure. The task of the Department of Student Services is to provide students with the support they need as they undergo the challenging transitions inherent in an intense intercultural and academic experience.

Gaw (1999) looks at reverse culture shock and how high levels of it correlate to willingness to see a counselor and to use student services on campus. Gaw found that returnees who experience higher levels of reverse culture shock were more likely to report more personal adjustment problems and shyness concerns than returnees who experience lower levels of reverse culture shock. It was also found that returnees who experienced higher levels of reverse culture shock were less likely to *use* student support services than were returnees experiences low levels of reverse culture shock.

This study showed a discrepancy between "willingness" and actual use of student services. From this, Gaw suggests that returnees' reverse culture shock experiences may have been a serious inhibitor in their reaching out for professional help. Gaw did not give many implications for university student services professionals, but I suggest that more staff should be put in place within universities to support and encourage students to reflect on their time abroad.

Abarbanel (2009) suggests the use of new terms to go along with a new approach

to study abroad as an opportunity to teach students positive skills in intercultural interactions (i.e. resilience, capacity for ambiguity, self-monitoring, self-regulating of emotions in times of distress). Instead of using terms like “culture shock” and “symptoms” of shock, Abarbanel uses “cultural transitions,” “cultural shift,” and “signals” to which programmers should be alerted. These terms lessen the association of cultural interaction with a debilitating difficulty.

Abarbanel looks to neuroscience to explain what happens during times of intercultural emotional distress, and the need for our brains to balance the highly stressful with activities that relax our brains. She relates this to the need to balance the high engagement experienced when entering a new culture with disengagement and reflection in order to maintain a healthy mind that is able to learn from the new experiences presented to study abroad students every day.

Students can develop a variety of successful coping strategies which can help them recognize and confront cultural assumptions and values of which they may have been unaware. Cox (2006) sought to discover the perceptions of international students at a large private research institution in California regarding the efficacy of a reentry workshop in preparing them for reacculturation to daily life in their home countries. Three survey questionnaires were administered. The purpose of the first questionnaire was to assess the interest and likelihood of international students in attending a reentry workshop. Over 250 international students responded to this initial survey. The second questionnaire assessed the students' first perceptions regarding the usefulness of the

Going Home workshop directly following the workshop. Sixty-six participants completed the evaluation survey after attending the Going Home workshop. Participants of the Going Home Workshop were invited to complete the final questionnaire. Although 21 international students responded to this survey, only 9 had actually returned to their home countries. The final survey focused on the participants' perceptions regarding the usefulness and efficacy of the Going Home workshop based on moving home and beginning the transition to life in their home countries. All respondents agreed that the Going Home workshop was generally useful to them. The majority of the respondents agreed that the workshop helped them in their transition to life back home. It appears that the length of the sojourn affected the perceived efficacy of the reentry workshop. This researcher was unable to determine if the ambiguous feelings that the majority of the students felt about returning home could be interpreted as unwillingness to return. It was impossible to determine if males and females perceived the efficacy of the workshop differently. The majority of the respondents agreed that the workshop helped them to reduce one or more of the symptoms of reverse culture shock.

Although many researchers and professionals support the need for reentry training, Sussman (1986) explains how reentry training and transitions research is a matter of cultural opinion. In the case of Eastern students studying in a Western host country, Sussman suggests that these students will not attempt to incorporate their Western learnings and values into their Eastern home country upon return, so as to better and more quickly fit into the collectivist culture. In the U.S., a culture that

tolerates and even encourages diversity, participation in a reentry workshop, which assists repatriates in understanding and integrating overseas experiences, may be viewed positively or at least neutrally. In other cultures, where one's goal upon reentry is to blend in with the group as quickly as possible, the American notion of reentry workshops may be justifiably mistrusted. For these returnees, "cognitively burying" their overseas experience may be the most appropriate strategy.

This paper also suggests topics that must and should be covered in a reentry workshop including awareness of change, understanding of cultural adaptation process, and ability to make personal adjustments to home and work environment.

Casteen (2006) studied the reentry experiences of students that participated in immersion study abroad programs. These students were found to have immersed more into the host culture than typical semester abroad students. Casteen measured the effects and usefulness of reentry programs. She found that students who felt well-prepared for reentry by their home institution (due to participating in pre-departure programs) suffered lower levels of reentry shock effects. Effective post-program (pre-reentry) preparation programs by the host institution were also found to correlate with lower levels of overall reentry shock effects. Student satisfaction, of programming, however, was less positive. "The overwhelming message is that a large percentage of students are significantly unhappy with the level of preparation for both study abroad and reentry". Casteen concludes that providing students with effective programming is a critically important element of the study abroad and reentry experiences.

Research Question

The question I attempted to answer through my research was what kinds of resources exist on this university campus to assist students who have recently returned from a study abroad program and are experiencing reentry shock? Were students aware of what was offered by the university in terms of reentry resources? Did they use them? In the opinions of the students, did these resources help? What new services could be implemented to further assist these students experiencing difficulties in their transition back to the United States and/or the university?

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

I answered these questions by using a large Midwestern university as a case study. I created and implemented an online survey based on my research in the subject of study abroad and reentry shock. This survey (Project #565) was approved by the Institutional Review Board and given Exempt status. A link to the survey was sent via email to all undergraduate students that participated in any study abroad program during the Fall 2010 semester, a total of 173 students.

The survey opened with a consent form by which students verified that they were 18 years of age and consented to complete the voluntary survey. The survey consisted of demographic items including age, gender, major, and study abroad location. I asked them to rate on a Likert scale their knowledge of reentry resources available to them at their university, their personal feelings of reentry shock, their usage of the university-provided resources, and their opinions on whether or not these resources were helpful to them regarding their reacculturation. The survey also posed open-ended questions regarding their thoughts about potential future resources for students like them.

For the purpose of this study, reentry shock was measured on a continuous scale and was based on participants' agreement with statements about how they felt after

they returned to the United States after studying abroad. These questions were based on the literature of returning study abroad students and the common experiences of feelings of reentry shock (Adler, 1982; NAFSA, 2005; Ryan & Twibell, 2000; Sussman, 2002). These common experiences were used as the reentry construct variables, including feelings of being misunderstood, lonely, depressed, and socially distant. The survey used 7 statements to measure a participant's level of reentry on a 1-7 scale. Students who agreed with these statements are believed to experience higher levels of reentry shock than students who disagree with these statements. After the data were collected, each participant's responses were summed to determine their individual level of reentry. The lowest possible score was 7, showing that a participant Strongly Disagreed with all of the statements about having feelings of reentry shock. The highest possible score was 49, showing that a participant Strongly Agreed with all of the statements about having feelings of reentry shock. The subsequent summed groupings were as follows: 7-13= No Reentry Shock; 14-20= Low Reentry Shock; 21-27= Moderately Low Reentry Shock; 28-34= Moderate Reentry Shock; 35-41= Moderately High Reentry Shock; 42-49= High Reentry Shock.

The reentry shock measure was also used in the regression and correlation models as the dependent variable to show relationships between different resources on campus and different demographics of students and how these related to participants' reentry measures.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Demographics

Of the 173 students that studied abroad during the Fall 2010 semester, a total of 79 students participated in this study, a response rate of 45.6%. The overwhelming majority of participants were female (82.3%; N=65), with only 14 male participants (17.7%). The majority of participants (53.2%; N=42) were 21 years of age. Twenty-five of the participants (31.6%) were 22 years of age, and six participants (7.6%) were 20 years of age. One participant (1.3%) was 19 years of age, and five participants (6.3%) were 23 years of age.

The overwhelming majority of participants studied in Europe (65.4%; N=51). Eight participants (10.2%) studied in Asia, six participants (7.7%) studied in Latin America, three participants (3.9%) studied in Africa and another three (3.9%) studied in an Oceanic country. Seven participants (8.9%) studied in multiple locations. The majority of participants (65.8%; N=52) studied abroad for a duration of between 3–5 months. Twenty participants (25.3%) studied abroad for more than 5 months. Five participants (6.3%) studied abroad for a duration of 1-2 months. Two participants (2.5%) studied abroad for less than one month.

The great majority of participants (65.8%; N=52) had a major in the Humanities. The second most common majors fell into the area of Business Administration (22.8%; N=18). The fewest number of participants (11.4%; N=9) were majoring in subjects in the Health Studies and Education fields.

Survey Results

Reentry shock was measured based on the participants' agreement with statements about how individuals felt after returning home from a study abroad experience. Participants' levels of reentry shock were measured using two different techniques: first, by counting the frequency of responses, and second, by summing their responses and placing them in one of the following categories: No Reentry Shock, Low Reentry Shock, Moderately Low Reentry Shock, Moderate Reentry Shock, Moderately High Reentry Shock, or High Reentry Shock. The first technique is shown in the chart below.

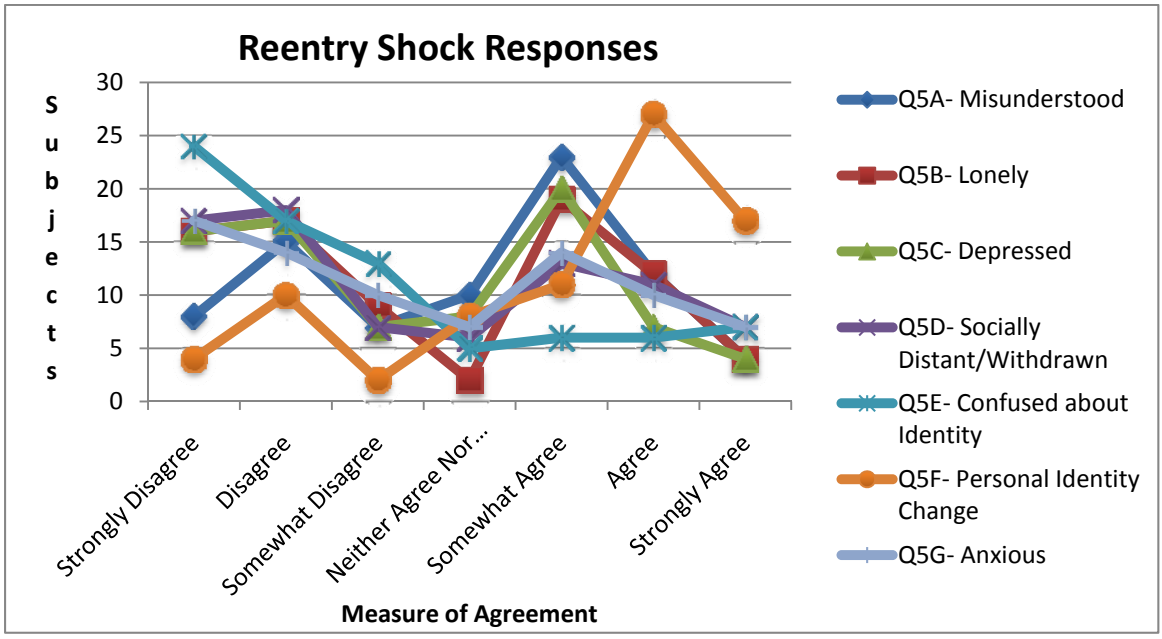

Figure 1: Reentry Shock Responses

For the second technique known as “binning”, 10 participants were found to have experienced No Reentry Shock, 16 participants experienced Low Reentry Shock, and 17 participants experienced Moderately Low Reentry Shock. It was also reported that 17 participants experienced Moderate Reentry Shock, 14 participants experienced Moderately High Reentry Shock, and 5 participants experienced High Reentry Shock. A chart of this data can be found below.

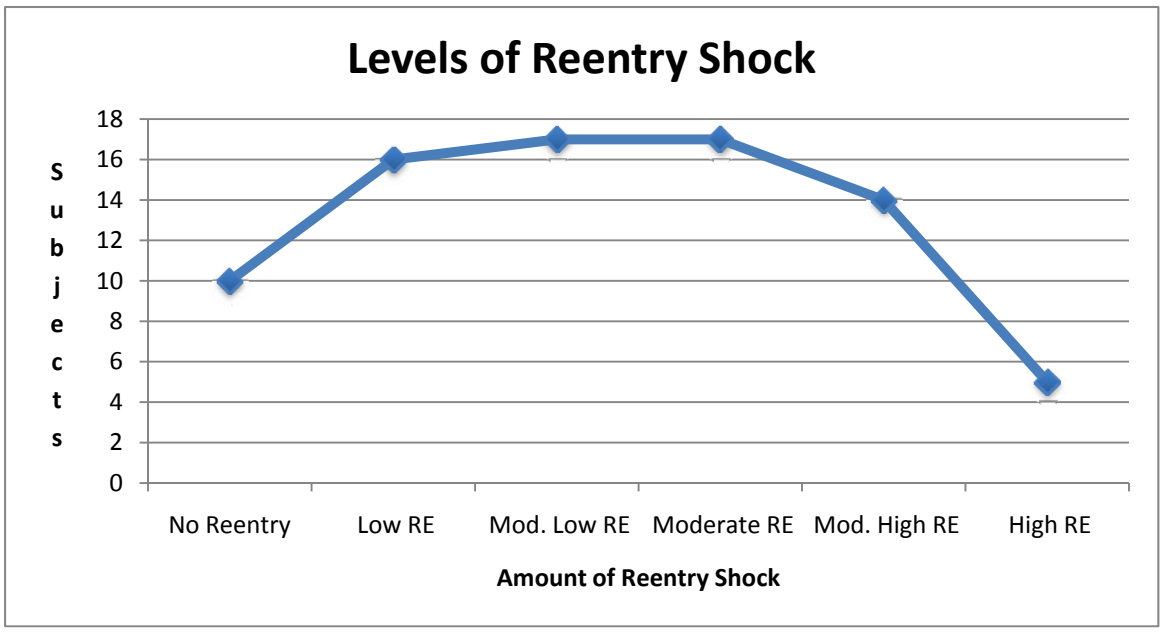

Figure 2: Levels of Reentry Shock

For the purpose of understanding the reentry shock spread, the reentry shock variables were averaged. The majority of the variables had an average between 3.0 and 4.0, with the average for Misunderstood being 3.97, the average for Lonely being 3.54, the average for Depressed being 3.45, the average for Socially Distant or Withdrawn being 3.52, and the average for Anxious being 3.57. The variable of Identity Confusion had an average reporting of 2.97 and the variable of Identity Change had an average reporting of 5.04, the highest average by far. A chart of these results can be found below.

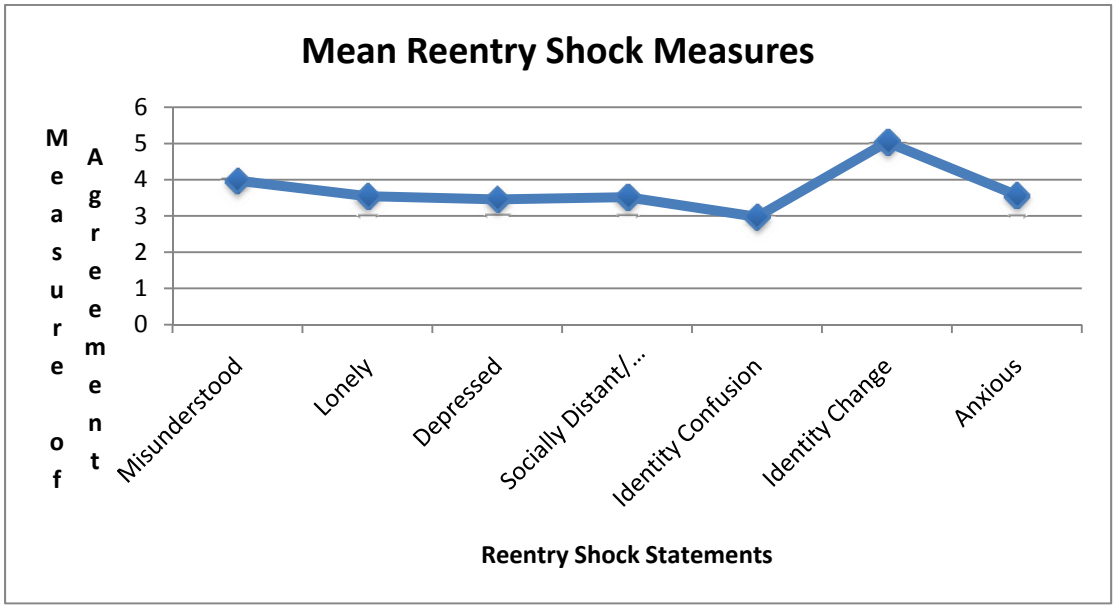

Figure 3: Mean Reentry Shock Measures

All survey participants were asked if they had visited the "Returned Students" page on the University Study Abroad website. The overwhelming majority (91.1%; N=72) responded that "No," they had not visited the Returned Students page. Conversely, 8.9% (N=7) of respondents did visit this webpage specifically for returned study abroad students.

When asked if they had read the university Returnee Handbook, 86.1% (N=68) of the participants said they had not read it. As a follow-up to this question, the 13.9% (N=11) that responded "Yes" were asked how helpful the Returnee Handbook was with regards to their future at the university in an academic capacity (involving transfers of courses from abroad, academic credit, etc). A large portion of the respondents (45.5%; N=5) claimed the Returnee Handbook was "Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful" in their academic transition back to Loyola. There were 3 respondents (27.3%) who thought of

the Returnee Handbook as “Helpful,” 2 respondents (18.2%) who thought it was “Somewhat Helpful,” and 1 respondent (9.1%) who thought it was “Extremely Helpful.”

As another follow-up to the original question of Returnee Handbook use, the 11 respondents were asked how helpful they thought the Returnee Handbook was regarding their future career. The majority of respondents (54.5%; N=6) responded that the handbook was “Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful.” Two respondents (2.5%) answered that the handbook was “Extremely Unhelpful” and another two respondents (2.5%) answered that it was “Somewhat Helpful.” One sole respondent (1.3%) claimed that the Returnee Handbook was “Helpful.”

As a third follow-up question to the original, the respondents were asked how helpful they thought the Returnee Handbook was in regards to their readjustment. Again, a large portion of the respondents (45.5%; N=5) responded that the handbook was “Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful” in their readjustment. One respondent (1.3%) claimed the Returnee Handbook was “Unhelpful”; one other respondent (1.3%) claimed it was “Somewhat Unhelpful.” Two respondents (2.5%) believed the Returnee Handbook to be “Somewhat Helpful”; one respondent (1.3%) thought it to be “Helpful” and another (1.3%) thought it “Extremely Helpful.”

The next question asked all respondents whether they had attended the Returnee Reception that the Office for International Programs hosts once every semester. The majority of respondents (84.8%; N=67) responded “No,” that they had not attended. For those respondents that replied that they had attended (15.2%; N=12), they were asked to rate how helpful the reception had been regarding their readjustment. A large

portion of the respondents (50%; N=6) replied that the reception had been “Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful.” Two respondents (16.7%) responded that the reception had been “Unhelpful.” Two respondents (16.7%) responded that the reception had been “Somewhat Helpful” in their readjustment, with one respondent (8.3%) responding that it had been “Helpful” and another (8.3%) responding that it had been “Extremely Helpful” in their readjustment.

The next question asked all respondents whether they had participated in the Study Abroad Photo Contest. The majority of respondents (79.9%; N=63) responded that “No,” they had not participated in the Study Abroad Photo Contest. For the respondents that replied “Yes,” that they had participated in the Study Abroad Photo Contest (20.3%; N=16), they were asked to rate how helpful the Study Abroad Photo Contest had been in their readjustment. A large portion of the respondents (50%; N=8) responded that the photo contest had been “Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful” in their readjustment. There was one respondent (6.3%) that rated the photo contest as “Extremely Unhelpful” and one respondent that rated the photo contest as “Extremely Helpful.” Four respondents (25%) responded that the photo contest had been “Unhelpful” in their readjustment and two (12.5%) responded that it had been “Somewhat Helpful” in their readjustment.

Survey participants were then asked whether they were still in contact with other American students from their study abroad program. The majority of respondents (92.4%; N=73) responded that “Yes,” they were still in contact with their American study abroad peers. Conversely, six respondents (7.6%) responded that “No,” they were not still in contact with other American students from their study abroad program. When

asking the 73 respondents that were in contact with other American students whether they considered these other students a source of support in the process of reentering their home environment, a large portion of the respondents (40.3%; N=29) responded that their peers were “Supportive.” Two respondents (2.5%) responded that their peers were “Extremely Unsupportive” and one respondent (1.3%) responded that their peers were “Somewhat Unsupportive.” Fourteen respondents (19.4%) thought of their peers as “Neither Supportive Nor Unsupportive” in their reentry process. Eight respondents (11.1%) replied that their peers were “Somewhat Supportive” and eighteen respondents (25%) replied that their peers were “Extremely Supportive” in their process of reentry.

As a follow-up question, the 73 respondents that reported they were still in contact with other American students from their study abroad program were asked to explain how they remained in contact. Eight of the participants (10.9%) did not respond. Of those that did respond, all 65 respondents reported that they use Facebook to remain in contact with American students from their study abroad program. The majority of the respondents (N=35; 53.8%) reported that they remain in contact by seeing their former study abroad peers in person. A large portion of the respondents reported that they remain in contact by phone (N=29; 44.6%), by text (N=24; 36.9%), or by email (N=20; 30.7%). Fewer of the respondents reported using the technology of Skype (N=16; 24.6%), Twitter (N=1; 1.5%), or online chat (N=1; 1.5%) to remain in contact with American study abroad peers. Four respondents (6.2%) reported using postal mail as a way to remain in contact with other American students.

All survey respondents were asked to check in a box any of the reentry resources

in which they would participate if they were available at their university. When asked if they would participate in "Free counseling sessions for returned study abroad students," 26 respondents (32.9%) responded that yes, they would participate. Conversely, 53 respondents (67.1%) did not say that they would participate. When asked if they would participate in "Study Abroad Workshops through the Office for International Programs," 20 respondents (25.3%) responded that yes, they would participate. Conversely, 59 respondents (74.7%) did not say that they would participate. When asked if they would participate in "Debriefing sessions through [their] study abroad program," 23 respondents (29.1%) responded that yes, they would participate. Conversely, 56 respondents (70.9%) did not say that they would participate. When asked if they would participate in an "Academic course focused on the reentry process after studying abroad ([for which they] would receive academic credit)," 28 respondents (35.4%) responded that yes, they would participate. Conversely, 51 respondents (64.6%) did not say that they would participate. When all four possibilities were analyzed further, it was found that 30 participants (38%) would not participate in any of the proposed resources, meaning that 62% (N=49) of respondents would participate in at least one of the proposed resources. Twenty participants (25.3%) responded that they would participate in one of the proposed resources, 16 participants (20.3%) responded that they would participate in two of the proposed resources, and 7 participants (8.9%) responded that they would participate in three of the proposed resources. A total of six students would participate in all four proposed resources if they were available.

All survey participants were then asked if there were any additional resources that

they found useful in their readjustment. Of those that responded (N=78), the majority (N=69; 88.5%) responded “No”. Nine respondents (11.5%) responded “Yes,” and were then given a follow-up question to explain what other resources they found useful in their readjustment. Two respondents (22.2%) reported that “talking with other study abroad students” was useful in their readjustment. Each of the following responses was reported one time by the survey respondents (11.1%): “attending a conference with a global focus,” “information sessions,” “readings,” “prescription antidepressants,” “talking with friends,” “personal faith,” “re-telling their accounts,” and “continuing language study of the host country.”

All survey participants were then asked to write any additional resources they *would* have found useful. Thirty-six participants responded, 13 of which (36.1%) responded that there was nothing else they would have found useful. Five of the respondents (13.8%) reported that they would have found “spending time with other returned study abroad students” useful in their readjustment. Five of the respondents (13.8%) also reported that they would have found “more information on existing resources” useful in their readjustment. Four of the respondents (11.1%) reported that they would have found “a reunion of study abroad programs” useful in their readjustment. Two respondents (5.5%) reported that they would have found “counseling” useful in their readjustment. Each of the following responses was reported one time (2.8%): “reverse culture shock resources,” “debriefing sessions,” “pre-departure mentoring,” “support from friends,” “support from family,” “resources while

abroad," "resources for study abroad students in romantic relationships," and "one-on-one meetings with study abroad advisor."

Regression Results

To elucidate what factors contribute to reentry shock, I conducted a regression analysis using the 7-item reentry shock scale as the dependent variable. This model empirically tested the relationship between country of study and reentry shock, using students who studied in Europe as the reference group. A number of additional independent variables were also utilized to understand a participant's reentry process. To begin, there was an inverse relationship between Shock and Duration, meaning that participants who studied for a longer amount of time were less likely to have Reentry Shock ($\beta = -.24$, $p = .89$); however, this relationship was not statistically significant. There was also an inverse relationship between Shock and Asia, meaning that participants who studied in Asia were less likely to have Reentry Shock ($\beta = -1.88$, $p = .61$); however, this relationship was not statistically significant. The relationship between Reentry Shock and studying in Africa was very close to being statistically significant, and the magnitude of the relationship between these two variables was very large. This means that the data were almost able to predict that studying abroad in Africa increases the likelihood of having reentry shock, however because of the p-value measure this is not the case. The other measures from the regression model were not statistically significant and were not close to being statistically significant.

Correlation Results

In order to test the bivariate relationships between the survey variables, I conducted a correlation analysis. The most important bivariate relationships to this study were found to be in the column relating to Shock. These relationships indicate whether a participant's reentry shock was higher or lower depending on the age, gender, duration, and use of university resources. The majority of the variables did not give a statistically significant result. In the case of the Returnee Handbook variable, the results indicate a statistically significant inverse relationship (p = .02), showing that those participants who read the Returnee Handbook had lower levels of Reentry Shock. In the case of the Reentry Reception variable, the results indicate a statistically significant inverse relationship (p = .03), showing that those participants who attended the Reentry Reception also had lower levels of Reentry Shock.

In the column related to the Webpage variable, the results indicate statistically significant relationships between the Handbook variable (p = .01), the Reception variable (p = .01), and the Contest variable (p = .049). This indicates that participants who visited the Reentry Webpage were also likely to have used the Returnee Handbook, attended the Returnee Reception, and participated in the Reentry Photo Contest.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

When looking at the participants in this survey and the reentry shock variable, it was found that most participants fell into the middle, experiencing Moderately Low to Moderately High levels of reentry shock. Based on the averages of each reentry shock variable response, participants Somewhat Agreed or Neither Agreed Nor Disagreed with statements about reentry shock. As these are averages, they tended to fall right in the middle. Based on the sums of participant responses, we see more of a spread among the levels of reentry shock, but still a grouping in the middle. It is only when we look at the actual responses (chart on page 27) that we see the high and low points of agreement with the reentry shock measures. It is perhaps because of the high reports of participants Somewhat Agreeing and the peak response of Agree on the Personal Identity Change measure, coupled with the high reports of participants Strongly Disagreeing that made the mean and reentry shock grouping fall so easily into the middle.

When participants were asked about the use of the reentry resources at the university, the overwhelming majority had not used them. In fact, when asked if they had visited the website, 91% of students had not. Regarding the Returnee Handbook, 86% had not read it, and those that had rated it neutrally in terms of helpfulness. When

asked about the Returnee Reception, 84% had not attended, and of those that had attended, 50% of students rated it neutrally, with the other 6 students rating it slightly more helpful than unhelpful. Regarding the Photo Contest, 79% of students had not participated, and among those that did participate, 50% of students rated it neutrally, with the other 8 students rating it slightly more unhelpful than helpful. Based on the results from the correlation analysis, two of the university-provided resources, the Returnee Handbook and the Returnee Reception, were shown to be correlated with lower levels of reentry shock. This result is surprising. These two university-provided resources were shown to be associated with students having lower levels of reentry shock if they attended, yet participants of these resources rated the helpfulness of the resources somewhat neutrally. This could suggest that these two resources are indeed helping the students with reentry shock but that the students do not acknowledge or are not aware of the helpful aspect of these resources. The Returnee Reception, rated more favorably by the participants than the Returnee Handbook, could have been seen as more helpful to students based on its active nature. The Returnee Reception brings together returned study abroad students and allows them to discuss and share experiences with people who understand and can relate. This resource certainly has a more active element than the Returnee Handbook which, while including helpful information, is much more passive in its approach to students. This suggests that resources having to do with personal connections and sharing of experiences could be more helpful to students than information in a packet.

The results from this survey indicate that returned study abroad students do want to use resources that could help with reentry shock if they were available. When the survey suggested resources and asked respondents if they would participate, 26 respondents said they would participate in counseling sessions, 20 respondents said they would participate in study abroad workshops, 23 respondents said they would participate in debriefing sessions, and 28 respondents said they would participate in an academic course focused on reentry. On average, 30% of returned study abroad students would participate in university-provided resources if they were available. At a university that sends over 500 undergraduate students abroad each year, this could mean that up to 150 students would participate in reentry resources on campus.

This survey also asked participants what other resources they *would* have found useful, to which respondents mentioned “reverse culture shock resources”, “a reunion of study abroad students”, “counseling”, “debriefing sessions”, and “literature on readjustment”, among others. The majority of the resources the respondents mentioned were either already in existence, suggested by the survey, or were focused around the concept of reentry adjustment.

Similar to previous research in the field of study abroad, the large majority of participants in this survey were female. Most participants were between 21 and 22 years of age when discussing their reentry experience, which kept in line with the research showing that most students who study abroad are 20 or 21 years old. The majority of the participants in this study had studied in Europe (65%) and a number of

the participants studied in Asia, Latin America, or Africa. Although there was an inverse relationship between students that studied in Asia and reentry shock, meaning that students who studied there were less likely to experience reentry shock, this did not prove to be a significant variable in experiencing reentry shock in this study. The relationship between a student studying in Africa and reentry shock was quite close, but this survey did not show this variable to be predictive. Had the sample been larger, this may have been proven to be significant. The majority of participants studied abroad for a period of 3-5 months (65%), and although there was an inverse relationship between these variables, duration of stay was not shown to be a significant factor of a student experiencing reentry shock. Although this result might be inconsistent with one's initial assumption that the longer a student studies abroad the more difficult their reentry experience is, much of the previous research suggests the opposite effect, that students who study abroad longer are more adept at the process of adapting and therefore experience less reentry shock (NAFSA, 2005; Pedersen, 1995; Storti, 1997). These data suggest this same peculiarity, that duration of stay does not affect reentry shock.

CHAPTER SIX:

RECOMMEDATIONS

This study sought to determine what kinds of resources exist at a particular university to assist students that have returned from a study abroad program and are experiencing the common feelings of reentry shock. It was shown that the large majority of students returning home do not participate in the university-provided resources, either due to lack of awareness or lack of interest. Those that did participate in the available resources seemed to find them lacking or had a neutral opinion about them. Although my study did not definitively show that students are not aware of university-provided resources, I believe that students are not using the available resources because they do not know when or what they are. The low numbers of students who even visited the Returned Students website, where all other reentry resources are explained and advertised, suggests the plausibility that students simply do not know what exists on campus to aid in reentry shock. Based on the results showing that students wished to participate in reentry counseling, debriefing sessions, and a reunion of study abroad students, there is an interest for participating in resources that either already exist or perhaps should exist on campus. Additionally, this shows that there is an interest in participating in more hands-on resources that include recounting study

abroad experiences and open discussions as opposed to passive resources like packets and brochures of information. I believe future research should be focused on the differences that these, and possibly other, types of reentry resources have on students' reentry shock. I also believe in the need for future research to go deeper into self-reports from students to determine why there is such a discrepancy between students rating the helpfulness of resources neutrally or poorly and the resources being shown to actually helping with reentry shock. Future studies should delve more deeply by using qualitative interviews or mixed methods research.

I propose that this university should incorporate more large-scale resources for students returning from study abroad programs in order to ease any level of reentry shock. First, I think there should be a credit-bearing course that allows students to reflect on the changes that have occurred or possible feelings of reentry shock due to their time abroad. These students would be encouraged to present what they learned while abroad and share with students who understand their experience. One of the most common troubles for a student experiencing reentry shock is the inability of their friends who did not study abroad to relate to them or listen to them when discussing their time abroad. If this course offered students credit toward their degree, it is very likely that students would participate in a class like this.

Second, I think the International Programs office should offer sessions in order to debrief about the experience of study abroad and to explain the experience of reentry

shock. Debriefing sessions could also go over ways in which students can continue to make use of and make sense of their time abroad. These sessions could help students who wish to structure their futures around a study abroad experience, or on a smaller scale, help students incorporate their study abroad into their resume. Finding ways to connect their study abroad experience to something practical could help lesson any feelings of reentry shock and could help a student who sees a future in the International Education arena.

As most universities (including the university in the present study) offer free counseling sessions to students, it should be a goal of the study abroad office to make known to students what is free and available for them on campus. Finding ways to make students aware of all the above-mentioned resources is the most important aspect of helping students with reentry shock. After all, the experience of study abroad, and within it the experiences of reentry, affords students the ability to negotiate new situations, act independently, reflect on their own values and beliefs, and reincorporate the new person that they have become; few traditional on-campus college experiences can compete with this unique opportunity.

APPENDIX A

RAW DATA FROM SURVEY

Table 1: Have you visited the Returned Students webpage?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	7	8.9
No	72	91.1

Table 2: Have you read the Returnee Handbook?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	11	13.9
No	68	86.1
If Yes, How helpful was the Handbook regarding your future at the university?	N	%
Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful	5	45.5
Somewhat Helpful	2	18.2
Helpful	3	27.3
Extremely Helpful	1	9.1
If Yes, How helpful was the Handbook regarding your future career?	N	%
Extremely Unhelpful	2	18.2
Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful	6	54.5
Somewhat Helpful	2	18.2
Helpful	1	9.1

If Yes, How helpful was the Handbook regarding your readjustment?	N	%
Unhelpful	1	9.1
Somewhat Unhelpful	1	9.1
Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful	5	45.5
Somewhat Helpful	2	18.2
Helpful	1	9.1
Extremely Helpful	1	9.1

Table 3: Did you attend the Returnee Reception?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	12	15.2
No	67	84.8
If Yes, How helpful was the Reception regarding your readjustment?	N	%
Unhelpful	2	16.7
Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful	6	50
Somewhat Helpful	2	16.7
Helpful	1	8.3
Extremely Helpful	1	8.3

Table 4: Did you participate in the Study Abroad Photo Contest?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	16	20.3
No	63	79.7
If Yes, How helpful was the contest regarding your readjustment?	N	%
Extremely Unhelpful	1	6.3
Unhelpful	4	25
Neither Helpful Nor Unhelpful	8	50
Somewhat Helpful	2	12.5
Extremely Helpful	1	6.3

Table 5: Are you still in contact with other American students from your study abroad program?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	73	92.4
No	6	7.6
If Yes, Do you consider them a source of support in your reentry process?	N	%
Extremely Unsupportive	2	2.8
Somewhat Unsupportive	1	1.4
Neither Supportive Nor Unsupportive	14	19.4
Somewhat Supportive	8	11.1
Supportive	29	40.3
Extremely Supportive	18	25

Table 6: Would you participate in free counseling sessions?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	53	67.1
No	26	32.9

Table 7: Would you participate in study abroad workshops?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	59	74.7
No	20	25.3

Table 8: Would you participate in debriefing sessions?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	56	70.9
No	23	29.1

Table 9: Would you participate in an academic course in reentry?

	N	%
Answer		
Yes	51	64.6
No	28	35.4

Table 10: How many resources would you participate in?

	N	%
0	30	38
1	20	25.3
2	16	20.3
3	7	8.9
4	6	7.6

Table 11: Demographics

	N	%
Gender		
Female	65	82.3
Male	14	17.7
Age	N	%
19	1	1.3
20	6	7.6
21	42	53.2
22	25	31.6
23	5	6.3
Location	N	%
Europe	51	65.4
Asia	8	10.2
Africa	3	3.9
Latin America	6	7.7
Oceania	3	3.9
Multiple Locations	7	8.9
Duration of Stay	N	%
Less than 1 month	2	2.5
1-2 months	5	6.3
3-5 months	52	65.8
More than 5 months	20	25.3
Major	N	%
Humanities	52	65.8
Business Administration	18	22.8
Health Studies & Education	9	11.4

APPENDIX B

TABLE OF REGRESSION MODEL

Table 12. Regression Model

	β	S.E.	p-value
Intercept	20.86	5.53	.001
Duration	-.24	1.75	.896
Asia[+] (1 = yes, 0 = no)	-1.88	3.62	.606
Africa[+]	9.71	4.99	.056
Latin America[+]	.49	3.85	.901
Oceana[+]	1.51	5.64	.789
Multiple[+]	4.74	4.49	.295

N = 78; R^2 = .07; [+]Comparison to Europe

APPENDIX C

TABLE OF CORRELATION MODEL

Table 13. Correlation Model

	Shock	Gender	Age	Duration	Webpage	Handbook	Reception	Contest
Shock	-							
Gender	.032	-						
Age	.102	-.037	-					
Duration	.041	-.104	.084	-				
Webpage	-.113	.147	-.092	-.142	-			
Handbook	.232*	.190*	.202*	-.084	.646*	-		
Reception	.212*	.107	-.132	-.185	.488*	.644	-	
Contest	.132	.059	-.119	-.301*	.188*	.083	-.028	-

N = 78, *p < .05

APPENDIX D

REENTRY EXPERIENCES AND RESOURCES SURVEY

1. Do you agree to participate in this survey?
Yes, I agree No, I do not agree

2. Please verify that XXXX University is your home undergraduate institution.
XXXX University is my home undergraduate institution
An institution other than XXXX University is my home undergraduate institution

3. For how many months did you study abroad?
<1 month 1-2 months 3-5 months 5+ months

4. How would you describe your overall study abroad program experience?
Very negative experience Negative experience Somewhat negative experience
Neither positive nor negative experience Somewhat positive experience
Positive experience Very positive experience

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

5. After returning to the United States from studying abroad, I felt misunderstood by those around me.
Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree

After returning to the United States, I felt lonely.
Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree

After returning to the United States, I felt depressed.
Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree

After returning to the United States from studying abroad, I felt socially distant and withdrawn from my friends.
Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree

After returning to the United States from studying abroad, I felt that my personal identity had changed.
Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree
After returning to the United States from studying abroad, I felt anxious.
Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree

6. Have you visited the “Returned Students” page on the XXXX University Study Abroad website?
Yes No

7. Have you read the XXXX University Returnee Handbook?
Yes No

8. If yes, how helpful did you find the Returnee Handbook concerning your future at Loyola (academic credit, transfer of courses, etc)?
Extremely unhelpful Unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat helpful Helpful Extremely helpful

9. If yes, how helpful did you find it concerning your future career?
Extremely unhelpful Unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat helpful Helpful Extremely helpful

10. If yes, how helpful did you find the Returnee Handbook in your readjustment?
Extremely unhelpful Unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat helpful Helpful Extremely helpful

11. Did you attend the Returnee Reception that the Office for International Programs hosts every semester?
Yes No

12. If yes, how helpful did you find it in your readjustment?
Extremely unhelpful Unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat helpful Helpful Extremely helpful

13. Did you participate in the Study Abroad Photo Contest?
Yes No

14. If yes, how helpful did you find the Study Abroad Photo Contest in your readjustment?
Extremely unhelpful Unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat helpful Helpful Extremely helpful

15. Are you still in contact with other American students from your study abroad program?
Yes No

16. If yes, would you consider these other students a source of support in your process of reentering your home environment?

Extremely unsupportive Unsupportive Somewhat unsupportive Neither supportive nor unsupportive Supportive Extremely supportive

17. If yes, please explain how you remain in contact (Facebook, Email, Twitter, etc.)

18. If these resources were available, would you participate in any of the following to assist with your readjustment? Check all that apply.
-Free counseling sessions for returned study abroad students
-Study Abroad workshops through the Office for International Programs
-Debriefing sessions through your study abroad program
-Academic course focused on the reentry process after studying abroad (would receive academic credit)

19. Were there any additional resources that you found useful in your readjustment?
Yes No

20. If yes, please identify and explain what other resources you found useful in your readjustment.

21. Are there any additional resources you would have found helpful?

22. What is your age?
<19 19 20 21 22 23 >23

23. What is your gender?
Female Male

24. What is your major at XXXX University?

25. Where did you study abroad?

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VITA

Jacqueline Pollis' personal and professional lives have been greatly influenced by international study and travel abroad. Her first experience abroad was in high school; she participated in a summer People to People Student Ambassador program. During her undergraduate program at Indiana University, she spent four months studying in Florence, Italy. After completing her B.A. in Psychology, with a minor in Italian, she began her Master's degree program at Loyola University Chicago, where she also studied at the John Felice Rome Center.

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THESIS APPROVAL SHEET

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature that appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date Director's Signature